Usability Report Cover Sheet

Project	• Overall Project: MLibrary Website • Project Title: Search/Browse Card Sort
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Usability Report

Introduction

The MLibrary Website provides options for users to search or browse the content of the site. The results pages for these features sort resources into different sections by type. Each of these sections is labeled with a heading to indicate the source of the results.

The goal for this test was to determine the order of the headings on the search results page and the browse results page. Additionally, the Task Force asked the meanings of the current headings and possible changes to the heading names.

Test Description & Methodology

Test Description

To assess the search and browse results headings, participants were placed in front of a computer and, starting from the MLibrary homepage, were asked to search or browse on a topic that they had looked for recently. Half of the participants were asked to search and half of the participants were asked to browse. After viewing the results screen, participants were given a sheet of paper with two columns and a set of cards with the names of the headings written on them. Participants were then asked to sort the cards into the two-column format in a way that would be most useful to them. Participants were also asked if they had alternate suggestions for the headings.

At the time of this test, headings for the search results page were ordered as follows (see Appendix 2 for screen shots):

Search Results Column 1	Search Results Column 2
Catalog (Mirlyn)	Website: Research Guides
Electronic Journals	Website
Databases	Website: Collections
	Website: Government Documents
	Deep Blue (Institutional Repository)

And headings for the browse results page were ordered as follows:

Browse Results Column 1	Browse Results Column 2
Electronic Journals	Research Guides
Databases	MLibrary Website
	New Books

Methodology

- Guerilla Test

- 6 participants assessed the search results page and 6 different participants assessed the browse results page

- Individuals were recruited for the test near the reference desk in the Graduate Library

- The test took approximately 5 minutes

- Participants each received two Blue Bucks for their time

Results and Recommendations

Search Results

1. **Place the "Website" heading in the first position in the second column**
   Five of six participants placed "Website" in the first position in the second column.

2. **Rename "Website: Collections"**
   Participants were unclear about the meaning of the heading "Website: Collections." There was additional confusion between "Website: Collections" and "Electronic Journals." (Additionally, many participants did not understand what "Deep Blue (Institutional Repository)" meant.) No replacement suggestions were given.

3. **Consider renaming "Website: Research Guides" or providing additional explanation**
   Although only one participant expressed confusion over the heading "Research Guides", it was unclear whether the other participants truly understood the heading. The Research Guides Usability Report (http://www.lib.umich.edu/node/22138) may resolve some issues around this label.

4. **Add additional information to the "Catalog (Mirlyn)" results, e.g., date, author, etc.**
   One participant felt that book titles were "not enough information to go on" in the search results. Discussion of this issue with the Usability Task Force resulted in agreement that this was an issue that should be improved with additional information in the Catalog results.

Browse Results

1. **Reorder the left column with "Databases" in the top position and "Electronic Journals" in the second position**
   Four out of six participants placed "Databases" in the top position in the left column and four participants placed "Electronic Journals" in the second position in either the left or the right column.

2. **Highlight "Research Guides"**
   Two participants were confused by the heading "Research Guides" and the remaining four participants appeared to be indifferent to the heading. Despite these results, discussion with the Usability Task Force indicated that the Library wants to encourage users to use the Research Guides section. To make it more visible to users, "Research Guides" should be highlighted with an explanatory tagline and a graphical element such as a colored background, icon, etc. See Search Results Recommendation #3 for additional feedback.

General Recommendations

1. **Rename the headings to mirror one another on the search and browse results pages**
   Although this was not tested, the fact that the heading names on the search and the browse results pages do not mirror one another is confusing and seemingly unnecessary. The Usability Task Force recommends changing the headings so they match. Examples of

inconsistency include "Website" vs. "MLibrary Website" and "Website: Research Guides" vs. "Research Guides."

2. **Further studies**
   Further study should be done on the content of the results pages to see if headings should be more consistent, if users really understand the types of resources that are available, and other big-picture issues related to how users interact with these features.

Lessons Learned

- Participants were happy to help.

- It was good to have a computer screen with the actual web site in addition to the paper for the card sort exercise.

- Because many of the participants did not seem to care about the content under many of the headings, they did not seem to have completely thoughtful responses to the sorting task and especially to the question regarding the names of the headings.

- This guerrilla test was effective for determining a useful order for the most popular headings in the search and browse results. Follow-up tests would be useful for gaining insight into what would be most useful to users in the search and browse results outside of the constraints of the headings, whether users actually understand each of the headings and what they find below them, and how the search and browse results reflect one another.

Appendix 1: Test Script

1. Hi, my name is _____ and I'm a librarian here at the University. I'm part of a group working to make the Library website better. Could you spare about 5 minutes to do a test for us? We can offer you a couple of Blue Bucks for your help.

[If they answer No:]

No problem. Thanks for your time.

[If they answer Yes:]

Thanks a lot. This may seem weird, but I'm going to read from this script to make sure we give everyone who talks to us today the same information. My colleague _____ here will take some notes as we talk. Before we start, what is your status at the university?

[Note their affiliation: faculty, undergrad student, grad student, staff, visiting scholar, etc.]

Thanks. First, let's start at the website homepage.

[Bring up the library homepage.]

2a. Have you ever searched on the library website?

[Note their answer.]

Using the search feature at the top of the home page, could you do a search for something you did research on recently?

[Have the user do a search however they'd like. If they don't have a topic in mind, ask their field of study/work or what their next class is and construct something out of that.]

Okay. This is what the search results page looks like now. You'll notice that the page has results divided up by information type, in two columns, and each section has a heading. Each section heading is listed on one of these cards. Could you put them in an order that's most useful for you in your research, using that same two column format?

[Have the user sort the cards in their ideal order. Answer any questions they have about what the section headings represent. Note both questions and the final sort order.]

Thanks. Now, what do you think about what the headings say? Do you think any of them should be called something else?

[Note any suggestions.]

2b. Have you used the browse feature before?
[Note their answer.]

Using the browse feature at the top of the home page, could you look up something you did research on recently?

[Have the user do a browse however they'd like. If they don't have a topic in mind, ask their field of study/work or what their next class is and construct something out of that.]

Okay. This is what the browse results page looks like now. You'll notice that the page has results divided up by information type, in two columns, and each section has a heading. Each section heading is listed on one of these cards. Could you put them in an order that's most useful for you in your research, using that same two column format?

[Have the user sort the cards in their ideal order. Answer any questions they have about what the section headings represent. Note both questions and the final sort order.]

Thanks. Now, what do you think about what the headings say? Do you think any of them should be called something else?

[Note any suggestions.]

3. While we're here, do you have any questions or comments about the library website?

[Note any comments.]

Thanks so much for your time. We really appreciate it. Here are your Blue Bucks. Have a great day!

Appendix 2: Screenshots

Example search results page:

Example browse results page:

MLibrary
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

About MLibrary   Services   Libraries | MGet It   Search Tools   Catalog (Mirlyn)

Search   MLibrary Articles Catalog
Find books, journals, databases, web pages   GO

Browse
- Select a Subject -

Get Help
Ask a Librarian   Using the Library

Home > MLibrary Browse > Dermatology

Browse Results for Dermatology

This is an overview of library resources related to Dermatology. See the Research Guides listed below for librarian-recommended resources on this topic.

Contact a specialist for in-depth research information on Dermatology.

Electronic Journals
1-5 of 79
The Journal of investigative dermatology.
British journal of dermatology.
Contact dermatitis.
Archives of dermatology.
Experimental dermatology
more ...

Research Guides
1-1 of 1
Dermatology
This guide provides information on resources in the field dermatology.

MLibrary Website
No results found

Library Contacts

Patricia Anderson
*Emerging Technologies Librarian,
Health Sciences Libraries (Senior
Associate Librarian)*
patriciafanderson@gmail.com
734 615 1513

Databases
1-5 of 13
AccessMedicine
AccessMedicine offers a complete suite of clinical and educational content from leading books, including Harrison's P...

CDSR [UM-MEDSEARCH]
The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews includes the full text of the regularly updated systematic reviews of the...

ISI Web of Knowledge
Provides cross-search of multiple databases: ISI Web of Science with Conference Proceedings (citation indexes), Curre...

MD Consult
MD Consult is a comprehensive collection of medical information including MEDLINE, full-text reference books, practic...

Micromedex Knowledge Bases
An integrated set of clinical decision support knowledge bases, including DRUGDEX, TOMES, MARTINDALE, EMERGINDEX, REP...

more ...

Appendix 3: Raw Data

<u>Search Results</u>

P1.
Status: Undergraduate, Senior
Experience with search function: Yes
Topic searched: El Salvador
Suggestions for Column 1: CM | EJ | D | DB
Suggestions for Column 2: W | WRG | WGD | WC
Feedback on the headings: I don't know what Deep Blue is
Additional feedback on web site: none

P2.
Status: Undergraduate
Experience with search function: No
Topic searched: Kurosawa
Suggestions for Column 1: CM | WC
Suggestions for Column 2: WRG
Feedback on the headings: Do not care about the other headings
Additional feedback on web site: none

P3.
Status: Graduate school applicant
Experience with search function: Yes
Topic searched: hindu muslim conflict india
Suggestions for Column 1: CM | EJ
Suggestions for Column 2: W | WC | D | WGD | DB
Feedback on the headings: What about Books? What is Deep Blue and Website: Collections?
Additional feedback on web site: Always gets someone to help with their search because she is never sure she gets everything

P4.
Status: Graduate school applicant
Experience with search function: No
Topic searched: hindu muslim conflict india
Suggestions for Column 1: CM | EJ
Suggestions for Column 2: WS | D | WGD
Feedback on the headings: Website: Research Guides, Website Collections, and Deep Blue are confusing headings
Additional feedback on web site: Would like to see additional information about the books in the search results

P5.
Status: Undergraduate
Experience with search function: Very litte
Topic searched: Curse of the Black Gold
Suggestions for Column 1: CM
Suggestions for Column 2: W
Feedback on the headings: The order of the other headings doesn't matter. "Looks good

enough to me."
Additional feedback on web site: none

P6.
Status: Undergraduate, Freshman
Experience with search function: Yes
Topic searched:lepanto
Suggestions for Column 1: CM | D | EJ | WGD
Suggestions for Column 2: W | WC | WRG | DB
Feedback on the headings: Excited by the task
Additional feedback on web site: There is a lot on it, it is important to the patron that he is able to find what he needs but he had trouble finding things at first with the new web site

Browse Results

P1.
Status: Law Student
Experience with browse function: No
Topic searched: Government, Politics, and Law -> Law and Legal Studies
Suggestions for Column 1: D | RG | EJ
Suggestions for Column 2: MW | NB
Feedback on the headings: none
Additional feedback on web site: The web site has gotten a lot better although it is difficult to find specific databases and he has to memorize ways to get places

P2.
Status: Undergraduate, Freshman
Experience with browse function: No
Topic searched: Humanities General
Suggestions for Column 1: DB | RG | NB
Suggestions for Column 2: EJ | MW
Feedback on the headings: none
Additional feedback on web site: none

P3.
Status: Undergraduate, Freshman
Experience with browse function: Yes
Topic searched: Science -> Science (General)
Suggestions for Column 1: D | RG
Suggestions for Column 2: MW | EJ
Feedback on the headings: The New Books heading can go in either column
Additional feedback on web site: "For the most part I like it"

P4.
Status: Undergraduate
Experience with browse function: No
Topic searched: Science
Suggestions for Column 1: D | EJ | NB
Suggestions for Column 2: MW | RG
Feedback on the headings: Not sure what Research Guides are
Additional feedback on web site: "I like the databases thing"

P5.
Status: Undergraduate, Senior
Experience with browse function: Maybe
Topic searched: Social Sciences -> Economics
Suggestions for Column 1: MW | EJ | RG
Suggestions for Column 2: D | NB
Feedback on the headings: More explanation is needed for Research Guides
Additional feedback on web site: Not familiar with the site

P6.
Status: Graduate student
Experience with browse function: Some
Topic searched: Humanities -> English Language and Literature
Suggestions for Column 1: RG | D | NB
Suggestions for Column 2: MW | EJ
Feedback on the headings: none
Additional feedback on web site: Happy with the new catalog. Likes the chunks in the search results because she can search for anything and will find it in the results.